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It is a criticism of the age rather than of the preacher to recognize that sermons of this type can today command only a rather limited number of hearers. With all their modernity of outlook, their style is that of the great English university preachers to whom Oxford and Cambridge used to listen with attention, or of the American Unitarians of the nineteenth century, with their clear thinking and their high appeal to the moral judgment rather than to the emotions. It requires a congregation with genuine intellectual interests and spiritual idealism to appreciate such preaching. It will be neither understood nor valued by people whose chief interest in the sermon is the hope that it will soon end that they may the more quickly reach the golf links or start the motor-car. But to those who value the great traditions of the pulpit and its position of intellectual prestige, this volume will be most welcome. It is the fruit of a long and honored ministry; the evidence that a kind of preaching which the world cannot afford to lose is still here and there to be found.

HENRY WILDER FOOTE.

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THE NEW ARCHEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES AND THEIR BEARING UPON THE NEW TESTAMENT AND UPON THE LIFE AND TIMES OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH. CAMDEN M. COBERN. Introduction by Edouard Naville. Funk & Wagnalls Co. 1917. Pp. xxxiv, 698. \$3.00.

This big and handsomely illustrated book by an American professor of the Bible is intended for popular readers, not for scholars, and must be judged by that aim. The author has had some experience in excavation, has seen many archæological discoveries and manuscripts, has read widely, and has diligently assembled material from many sources "to make this work a 'corpus' of all the more fascinating facts and all the most beautiful and worthy sayings that have floated down to us from the opulent centuries in which the earliest Church was trained." Unfortunately the exaggeration of expression and the indefiniteness of thought regarding his task which appear in the author's language here quoted from his preface, are characteristic of the book.

The material objects recovered from the past in modern times (as well as the ancient books and private bits of writing) have expanded and enlivened our knowledge, have sustained or corrected the conclusions of patient scholarship, occasionally (though rarely) have answered a debated question. To make from this vast mass of facts newly brought to light suitable selections which should show

clearly what the gains have been and wherein their importance lies, would be a valuable service, instructive to any reader who desires a just view of the early history of Christianity. Such a work would at the same time strengthen confidence, as this book aims to do, in the critically tested knowledge which scholars have drawn, and always will have to draw, mainly from more familiar sources — the well-known books preserved by successive generations and studied for centuries past. But to perform such a task requires not only this author's wide acquaintance with modern archæological exploration, but a more discriminating judgment than this book shows as to the exact positive significance of the discoveries for historical knowledge, and with that a clearer understanding of the difference between popular and purely scholarly interests.

The best parts of the book are the summaries of the results of archæological work, such as that at Oxyrhynchus, in Palestine, Syria, Asia Minor, at Pompeii, Rome, and other places. These are derived from the writer's own work and from explorers' memoirs; and it is interesting to learn the details of humble life in Egypt, to see pictures of Christian churches and the houses of Christians in Syria in the period from the fourth to the seventh century, or to read the graffiti of lovers and loafers at Pompeii. But very little of all this (that which comes from Palestine least of all) has any relation to Christianity; still less is it capable of throwing any light on the New Testament or on "the life and times of the primitive Church." Great ranges of remote facts like these must indeed be considered by scholars, but for the popular reader much, if not most, of it all is of no use whatever. The most significant subject for the New Testament here treated is perhaps that of ancient conventional forms used in writing letters.

A long section of the book consists of descriptions and lists of more or less recently discovered New Testament manuscripts, especially papyrus fragments. These accounts are obviously inadequate for the scholar, while they are confusing, and, it must in all kindness be added, misleading for the popular reader. One great object of the author's interest seems to lie in pointing out the important verses which accidentally happen to be included in this or the other papyrus scrap. Now apart from the fact that hardly any two pages of the New Testament can be found which do not contain at least one highly prized verse, it is very wrong to give the unlearned public the impression that our knowledge of and confidence in the text of the New Testament depends on such chances as these. We should be just as sure of the substantial trustworthiness of the

New Testament text if these papyri had never turned up. And this is part of a tendency unhappily characteristic of Professor Cobern's discussion of these text-critical matters, which has not been escaped by others who have attempted the same thing. In order to make interesting to a general public facts which are in themselves unimportant except to scholars for their own special purposes, it is necessary to exaggerate the "sensational," "epoch-making," "surprising" importance of these discoveries. For instance, in speaking of a third-century papyrus leaf from a New Testament, the author says that "the whole tone of modern New Testament criticism was changed for the better" by the observation that this leaf was in close agreement with Westcott and Hort's text, and exclaims, "It looked as if the Church of the martyrs possess the same New Testament as our fathers revered." One is disposed to ask who ever doubted this, and also whether we have gone so far that a book first published in 1881 is the Testament of "our fathers." The author himself later remarks (p. 173) that "it must be frankly acknowledged that nothing very spectacular or strange has been brought to light in these sixty or more texts." A slight justification for his exaggeration may be found in the fact that he speaks seriously of the opinion of "some skeptics" that "the present New Testament was either originated by Constantine or much changed by him"!

In the discussion of textual criticism and the accounts of early Christian and other documents lately discovered or more fully studied, the writer gives, as elsewhere, much that can be of interest only to scholars, but for them what he gives is wholly inadequate and is not free from painful crudities and errors. Thus one cannot properly say that the assurance that Tatian's Diatessaron was composed from our four Gospels has "rendered obsolete" the theories of Baur and Strauss (p. 209). To hear of Zahn and Harnack as the contributors to knowledge in the Ignatian question, with no slightest mention of Lightfoot; to read that Cicero is said not to have known Greek until he was over eighty years of age; to find a document well known for centuries described as the "recently recovered" Festal Letter of 367 of Athanasius — if it be indifferent to the simple reader whether such things are correctly and justly stated or not, then they ought not to appear in such a book at all.

It is with reluctance that this criticism is written. It is indeed true that no one could read the book through without having his attention drawn to many noteworthy things in a wide field, some of which have to do with the New Testament or with a more or less early Christianity. The extracts from the Psalms and Odes of

Solomon are worth giving here. And many readers will doubtless pick up one or another fact for which they will be grateful because they can use it. But the scholarship of the book is not sufficient for the exacting demands of its popular purpose. At a moment when America must look forward to taking up scholarly tasks dropped by the shattered forces of other lands, it is disquieting to receive a book like this, which tries to cover a great field with popular encyclopædic information, but which everywhere betrays defective training and shows enough neither of thinking nor of omitting nor of revising.

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THE REVIVAL OF THE CONVENTUAL LIFE IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. RALPH W. SOCKMAN. W. D. Gray. New York. 1917. Pp. 230.

It is not often that a thesis for a doctorate merits notice in a quarterly Review. This of Mr. Sockman's does. It is all that a thesis should be — its theme sufficiently worthy, its treatment un-deviating and straight to its end, its learning ample, its sources wide. The author puts his facts clearly, lets the reader draw his inferences, and keeps his own opinions largely to himself.

Many persons will be surprised at the extent to which monasticism in its various forms has prevailed in the Church of England since the Reformation. Mr. Sockman holds that its root is in the desire for the contemplative life, for asceticism, and for increased opportunities of service, and that this root still existed in the Church of England after the Reformation, though its outward forms had been for the most part cut off. Nicholas Ferrar's house at Little Gidding (1625) was the first attempt to embody the conventual idea; and though this was followed by a few others, and though their legitimacy was recognized by ecclesiastical authorities here and there, but little interest was felt in the matter until the French Revolution sent into England large numbers of priests, monks, and nuns. "That which left an abiding influence in England and contributed silently and indirectly to the Catholic revival, was the patience in poverty, dignity in bearing misfortune, exemplary conduct, and holy living displayed by these victims of the French Revolution. Sympathy, admiration, and the fear of Jacobism were all paving the way for the Catholic revival in England" (p. 26).

In the early part of the nineteenth century, increased interest was aroused by the pressure of the problem of surplus and unemployed